

# The Purloined Newsletter

A CAPITAL CRIME WRITERS PUBLICATION

Volume 19, Issue 9 – November 2007

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**Capital Crime Writers** is an organization of writers working in the mystery field, and readers who love the genre.

We meet on the second Wednesday of each month to discuss writing and crime, with the exception of July and August when meetings are suspended for the summer.

Membership is \$30 per year, \$15 corresponding.

Meetings are held in Room 156 at the Library and Archives Canada, 395 Wellington Street.

There is a meet and greet from 7:00 p.m. to 7:15 p.m., prior to every meeting.

## Next Meeting: November 14, 2007

**Come hear Constable Andrew Thompson from the Ottawa Police Department's High Tech Crime Unit give us the bits and bytes on computer crime.**

Constable Thompson will talk about what kinds of investigations they do concerning high tech crime, including child pornography investigations.

Get a sense of what a day in the life of a computer crime investigator is like, what kinds of criminals he deals with, and what kinds of tools are used to find evidence via the Internet – as well as on seized computers and cell phones.

## December 12th Meeting: Holiday Dinner at Biagios!



Come join us for our annual holiday dinner and guest speaker on Wednesday, December 12 starting at 6:30 at Biagio's Italian Kitchen. This is a new location this year! Stay tuned for the news on the speaker for this event – they will be announced in the near future.

**When:** December 12, 2007  
Arrivals start at 6:30

**Where:** Biagio's Italian Kitchen  
1394 Richmond Rd.  
<http://www.biagios.ca/>

**RSVP to Bev Panasky at:** [bev.panasky@gmail.com](mailto:bev.panasky@gmail.com)

**Your Program Committee: Ken, Bev & Deborah**

## From the Chair – Brenda Chapman

The October meeting was well attended, and again, we welcomed new members to our growing ranks. I was pleased to be teamed up with Linda Wiken, Michael Steinberg and Rick Mofina to discuss the current book market and genre mystery writing. Thank you to Bev Panasky for

moderating the evening and organizing the night's discussion, which gave us clearer insight into the publishing industry and possible markets.



### The CCW Executive

**Chair:** Brenda Chapman

**VP:** Susan Gates

**Past Chair:** Barbara Fradkin

**Treasurer:** Sheila Gallant Halloran

**Programs & Workshops:** Ken Gibson, Bev Panasky & Deborah Gyapong

**Membership Secretary:** Darlene Cole

**Newsletter Editor**

Katherine Hobbs 613-263-0069  
Newsletter@capitalcrimewriters.ca

**Public Relations** – Katherine Hobbs  
PR@capitalcrimewriters.ca

**Webmaster** – Darren O'Shaughnessy

**Web site:** www.capitalcrimewriters.ca

Since I know most of you have started on your Christmas shopping (or at least have been startled to see the decorations back up in the stores) it's a good time to also start planning to attend our annual holiday dinner, which this year will be held at Biagio's near Lincoln Fields December 12<sup>th</sup>. The change of location is entirely due to Capone's closure. Our guest speaker is still to be determined, but please mark the date on your calendars – more information will follow.

We are actively recruiting new members and thank Darlene Cole for leading the charge. Katherine Hobbs has also been doing a fine job letting the various media outlets know about our organization and our monthly meetings. Please consider inviting friends to come to a meeting to see if they would be interested in becoming members. Also do not forget that Katherine is looking for submissions from you for the *Purloined Newsletter*, including any writing news and accomplishments you would like to share.

Well, the cold weather is upon us once again and it's an excellent time to work on a manuscript or to curl up in front of a fire with a good book and a cup of something hot – You probably agree that these activities are preferable to holiday shopping, which I'm certain can be put off another month at least . . .

**Brenda**

### Memorable Quotes from Writers:

"Any book worth reading at age ten is worth reading at fifty."

(C.S. Lewis)

## Editor's Notes – Katherine Hobbs



You may notice there's a little more to this month's issue and that's because there was a lot more going on. The fall appears to have been made for the adoration of all things literary. I transcribed 15 pages from the CCW meeting on the mystery market and couldn't bear to let any of it go unpublished. It's just too good! So additional pages have been added to this month's issue for a total of 12. What didn't fit will be carried over to December's issue. Stay tuned for the remainder of what was discussed by the

panel of experts next month.

In September Word on the Street (WOTS) was held in Toronto, and Ottawa hosted its annual Writers Festival in October – and those were but two of the events of the season. Read about Peter

Robinson on page 4, who spoke at the festival and Barbara Fradkin at WOTS on page 5. But for everything that's passed, there's certainly plenty to come – in the form of book launches, contests, and other events. Here's some advice stolen from Bette Davis for all the literary lovers out there trying to fit everything in: "Hang on to your hats, it's bound to be a bumpy ride." Hope you can get out there and get a chance to enjoy it all! **Katherine**

## Announcements

### Contests



#### 2008 National Capital Writing Contest

Deadline: February 8, 2008. You can submit a short story, essay or poetry work. First prize is sponsored by The Ottawa Citizen and is \$250.00. The contest is open to all writers in Eastern Ontario and Western Quebec.

For contest information and guidelines go to: <http://www.canauthors-ottawa.org/contests.shtml>

### Web Resources



#### OpenBookToronto.com

OpenBookToronto.com serves as a hub for all things local and literary year round. Keep updated on book news, be entertained by videos and photos, and get information about upcoming literary events in and around Toronto. Every month, OpenBookToronto.com will feature a new Writer-In-Residence who will keep a regular blog and will be available to answer your questions. There's also an online magazine.

#### AuthorNation.com

Take a look at [www.AuthorNation.com](http://www.AuthorNation.com) -- It's a brand new community free for all to join, share, discuss and promote their work.

### Events



#### Canada Council Information Session on Funding - November 13

DATE: Nov 13, 2007

LOCATION: Auditorium, Ottawa Public Library, 120 Metcalfe Street at Laurier

TIME: 7:00 p.m.

DETAILS: A Program Officer from Canada Council for the Arts will provide an information session on funding available to professional writers from Canada Council.

COST: Free

**OIW 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Author Book Fair** will be held at Clark Hall in the RA Centre on Saturday November 10 and Sunday November 11.

#### Mary Jane Maffini & Barbara Fradkin Official Book Launch

When: November 15

Time: 7 - 9 p.m.

The official launch of Barbara Fradkin's latest Inspector Green mystery, *Dream Chasers* and Mary Jane Maffini's second Fiona Silk mystery, *Too Hot to Handle*, will be held at the Library and Archives Canada, 395 Wellington St., Ottawa on November 15. Come for the wine, music and good food, along with readings and signings. Free admission.



*Meet Darlene Cole, newest member of the CCW executive. Darlene has taken on the role of membership secretary and is focussing on retaining and increasing our membership, in addition to her role in the overall running of the CCW.*

I wrote the first draft of a young adult book for my daughter in '97 and then got a full time job and put it aside. I haven't looked at it again since as I downloaded it onto two Mac disks - the 3 x 3 inch type, and thanks to the changes in technology I don't know how to retrieve the files.

I particularly love reading books with recurring characters; the more books with that same character the happier I am. I was introduced to Nancy Drew over 40 years ago and I've just gone on from there. My favourite character is Peter Whimsey, followed closely by Inspector Banks and I love Rebus, Detective Inspector Napoleon Bonaparte and Roderick Alleyn. I also love "end of the world" novels and anything set in either of the World Wars - like Three Day Road, Birdsong, The Road, and anything written by Wayne Johnston, Sebastian Faulks, Dashiell Hammett or Nevil Shute. I really like Dennis Lehane, T.C. Boyle and Frances Itani as well.

I LOVE Bill Bryson and if we weren't married to other people I'm sure we would make the perfect couple. I'll also read Anne Rice, Stephen King, Dean Koontz and any book recommended by reviewers or friends. Oh, and I love poetry, especially the work of Robert Service.

**Darlene**

## **Criminal Minds: Mystery Night at the Writers Festival with Peter Robinson**

Peter Robinson's theory on crime books is simple: You need a detective, and a body. On Saturday, October 15 Peter was at Library & Archives Canada as part of the 2007 Writers Festival. He started off with a reading, and loved the gasps from the audience when he suggested he was going to read the last page of his new book, *Piece of My Heart*. After all, he explained, he's been all over the country doing readings, and he's looking for new sections to keep things fresh. Luckily he did not read the last page, but instead read the opening paragraph regarding the murder and a riveting section somewhere in the middle concerning his protagonist. Then he announced, "Well, now you have it - the body, and the detective."

Later during the Q&A Robinson was asked if it was possible for his protagonist, Allan Banks to have a stable relationship. Peter replied, "The evidence says not. Detectives are hard to live with. But his unhappiness is mostly the readers fault." There was a roar of laughter before he continued. "Because you'd get bored if he had a happy, contented life. And true love never runs smoothly for anyone, especially for detectives."

There was cause for further amusement when Robinson answered the next question regarding when a writer should kill off his character - how many books? Peter replied, "I think I'm going to kill him in the next book!" Then he went on to explain that there may be a time for Banks to go, but right now he still feels there are lots of nooks and crannies to explore with him. But when he does go, it will not be something boring like retiring, or overly dramatic like killing him off. He'd rather do something to create an ignominious end to Banks, like promoting him to Chief Constable and having everyone hate him. He also discussed why the mystery genre has so many serials, referring to how author Ed McBain saw each novel he wrote simply as a chapter in a bigger novel. His work (80 books) covered New York over a time span of 50 years. Robinson's sure that's what appeals - it's the dance through a period of time. And so far Peter Robinson is showing us a great dance with Allan Banks - let's hope he isn't going anywhere.



## Barbara Fradkin at Word on the Street

By Katherine Hobbs

The last Sunday in September is a great day for those who love the printed word. Queen's Park is the perfect backdrop for Word on the Street (WOTS) – Toronto's book and magazine festival.

The grounds are transformed into a literary paradise with readings, panel discussions, workshops and performances. There are authors galore such as Canadian literary stars Vincent Lam, Richard B. Wright and headliner David Suzuki. To keep everyone energized there are plenty of culinary options, like corn on the cob cooked in the husk then peeled back to serve – it's messy, dripping in butter, and delicious.



Walking down Literacy Lane you pass dozens of tents with organizations promoting literacy, magazines and book publishers. In the Writer's Block area, the authors sit in attendance, segregated by genre. Barbara Fradkin was front and centre in the crime writing tent.



CCW's Barbara Fradkin signs books for fans

"This festival gets bigger and better every year, and it's a real pity Ottawa doesn't do one," Fradkin says. "Many cities across Canada do, as part of the celebration of the written word."

For the time being, we can only hope!

**Readings on the main stage**

**Strolling down Literacy Lane**



## Avoid being wronged -- know your rights

At the October meeting Rick Mofina talked about a writer he knew who sent a story to Japan that eventually became a television hit. He advised us to pay attention to our copyrights, as "you never know what your little story is going to do," and advised it's up to us to protect our work and any potential future income. Basically the original author of a work owns the copyright to that work, unless he or she has assigned those rights to a third party. Following is a cursory overview of some of the most common types of rights that an author has to deal with, but this article is in no way intended to be a substitute for the informative how-to publication: "Getting your Book Published for Dummies." Getting the advice of your lawyer or agent might be good too!

**First Serial Rights:** A writer selling First Serial Rights is selling a newspaper, magazine or periodical the right to publish the story, article or poem for the first time in any periodical. All other rights remain with the author. First Serial Rights may be limited by geographical limits.

**First North American Serial Rights ("FNASR")** limits the license to periodicals published in the United States and Canada. Note: First Serial Rights sold to an online publication cannot be limited by geographic area because the Internet is accessible by a worldwide audience.

**One-Time Rights:** A license of one-time rights grants the licensee the right to publish the work one time. This is a non-exclusive right which means the author may sell one-time rights to several publications at once -- normally to publications with different audiences.

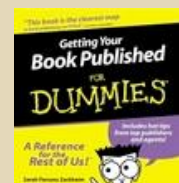
**Second Serial (Reprint) Rights:** A license of Second Serial Rights gives the publication the right to publish the story, article or poem after the piece has already been published by another periodical. Second Serial Rights are nonexclusive; the author may license the piece to more than one publication.

**All Rights:** A license of All Rights is when the author is giving up all rights he or she owns in the work. The publisher may publish the work in any format -- print, film, electronic formats, and on the Internet without providing additional payment to the author. The author retains the right to state that he or she authored the work, but loses all the other rights to the work, including the right to publish, market or distribute the work, or to create derivative works.

**Subsidiary Rights:** In a book publishing contract, subsidiary rights are all rights owned by the author other than the right to publish the book. Subsidiary rights are negotiable in a book contract and will cover such potentially valuable rights as movie, film, videotape and audiotape rights, translation rights, foreign rights etc. Subsidiary rights may be retained by the author so that the author's agent or attorney can negotiate separate deals for each of the rights -- generally the more favourable deal is achieved this way but alternatively the subsidiary rights may be sold to the book publisher so that the publisher can negotiate the rights.

**Dramatic Rights:** These are the rights licensed when selling work for use in a play, television or film. If you see your book as a perfect movie-of-the-week or as a Broadway musical, then fight to control the media rights all yourself, or at least reduce the publisher's split.

**Electronic Rights:** Those who write for online publications should ask the editor to spell out in plain language exactly what rights they are purchasing. Most editors are happy to explain their publication's policies. Keep copies of all the correspondence as it constitutes a binding contract if it clearly shows what the parties intended. Authors should look very carefully at all electronic rights clauses to ensure they are compensated for any uses made or authorized by the Publisher.



## The Mystery Market – October Meeting Overview

By Katherine Hobbs

October's meeting welcomed a panel of editors and authors and provided scads of information on what's selling, and how to sell it. Mike Steinberg, Associate Editor of Storyteller Magazine, Linda Wiken, Editor of Ladies Killing Circle anthologies and owner of Prime Crime book store were on hand to represent the editor's side of the story. Brenda Chapman, Young Adult mystery writer and Rick Mofina, thriller mystery writer rounded out the panel with their perspectives on what sells and how to sell it.

Bev Panasky, author and CCW executive member (Program Committee) was asking the questions -- and boy, did they elicit an abundance of material. Because of the expanse of information the panel shared with us it ended up as a 15 page transcript -- which doesn't all fit in this month's issue of The Purloined Newsletter. With all the positive comments received on the evening, including Paul Sadler's quote on page 9, a decision was made to continue with the remainder of the material in December's issue. But for now, here goes -- the first segment.

### Bev Panasky: What's selling out there? Let's start with the editors.

**Linda Wiken:** If you're being translated from Swedish then you are the hottest seller in town right now -- or any of the Scandinavian countries actually. They are super, super hot. That's what's selling off the shelf. The writers that are being translated are all award winners and have been writing for many years over there. International mysteries have been bestsellers for a long time, but it's usually the ones set in Italy or Spain -- the hot climates that do well. Now the Scandinavians are driving the market. That's the good or the bad news; however you choose to look at it.

However it's still an interesting time to be involved in the mystery field; there remains quite a wide variety of books in the genre. Historicals were extremely hot for the last few years -- and are still popular, but beginning to wane somewhat. But if you are writing a historical in any time period it's still a good time to be doing that. Mysteries are very trend driven, but you never know how long a trend will last or what the next trend is in the making. Something to keep in mind is that there are still tons of readers who love cosies and amateur sleuth stories and they will never deviate from that. Police procedurals are also very popular, particularly British ones. And Canadian ones are becoming more popular.

I think this is partly because we are getting good press.

Mike Gillespie at the Citizen was very kind to local writers, whenever there was a new novel out he tried to feature it, or at least mention it. And this has been a change over the years because Canadian writers were ignored for a long time. Margaret Hannan is very good too. She will even review mass market mysteries by Canadians where for the longest while that wasn't happening. So being Canadian is good -- you are ahead there.

It's interesting because the US market as a general rule of thumb won't buy mysteries set in Canada. It's changing, but not fast enough. It's a problem because Americans love mysteries set in Canada. A lot of my customers will come up and they will buy books by local authors to start with. If anything is set in Canada it's at the top of their priority list. But the American publishers haven't caught up with that yet -- they are starting, but in general you have to have already made your mark. For example Mary Jane Maffini has her two series set in this area and they are doing extremely well. She now has a third series with one of the biggest publishers, Berkley Press in the States, but she had to set it in northern New York before they would take it. And this is mass market -- we're not even talking hard covers. It's still an area that room for improvement I think.

The big problem is who do you go to if you have a book you're want to market? Unfortunately the big guys: Harper Collins, Random House, and McClelland Stewart (which is part of Random House now) are not taking new authors, and they are not taking unknown authors. They're looking for people that have a track record and this isn't going to change in the near future. They only take *agented* works as well -- they say they have slush piles and you can send things in -- but I've not heard of them taking a new unproven author in a decade or so, and it doesn't look like that is going to change.

**"If you are a Swedish writer being translated into English, you're the hottest thing on the market right now..."**

**Linda Wiken, Editor**



McClelland Stewart has in the last two years gotten Peter Robinson and he'd already been with Penguin for many years and was very popular. Along with Peter they have Gail Bowen and Maureen Jennings – that's three of the top ones in Canada on their list and they are not really looking for anyone else at the moment from what I've heard. So it's very tough out there. You have to look at the smaller press; they are certainly the way to break in.

Napoleon Rendezvous who handle, Mary Jane Maffini, Barbara Fradkin, Brenda Chapman, Robin Harlick, and the Ladies Killing Circle anthologies are very good. I think they have been best small press for giving new authors a break in Canada. But they are having to look at who they are publishing and revisit the makeup of their stable as they realize they have a lot of female authors. If you are male you've got a good chance with them, and not setting it in Ottawa helps too. But as I say they are having to cut back and just watch who they are bringing in. Regardless, they have their list full until 2009. You'll find that with any small press they are booked up well in advance.

Dundurn Press have Alex Brett and Suzanne Kingsmill from Shawville; Suzanne set her first novel in this area. They are looking for an edgier novel, such as a thriller or police procedural. They're still a good one to try even though they don't put out a lot of new titles each year. Turnstone Press in Winnipeg also don't have too many new writers, but they are still worth a try; they've had a lot of new writers over the years they seem to be all over the board. If it's well written they'll look at it, so certainly worth sending your manuscript to. Signature Press in Alberta have had new authors, not published before, in their stable. Mercury Press doesn't have many new books coming out, and they will look at new manuscripts.



**Pictured l-r: Associate Editor of Storyteller Magazine, Mike Steinberg; Author Bev Panasky; Editor of The Ladies Killing Circle anthologies and owner of Prime Crime Books, Linda Wiken; Young Adult mystery author Brenda Chapman; thriller mystery author Rick Mofina. All took part in the CCW Mystery Market panel discussion on October**

However, check out the Canadian Publisher directory. It's available in the Public Library reference departments and they have all the listings. It's the best place to start your research if you were to send anything in.

In regards to other publishing options, I would be very cautious about going with somebody who is known as a co-op publisher where the author pays 50% and the publisher pays 50%. Your best bet is still an established publisher when you are looking at placing your work in the bookstores. A lot of bookstores don't have the time to read manuscripts or blurbs, or an advance reading copy. For Prime Crime I need to have an advance reading copy and one of the four of us at the store will read it before making a decision, or else we'll take your book on consignment.

If you self publish, consignment is the route you will have to go. We keep books for a three month period and try and sell them. You have to pay the discount to the book seller out of your own pocket, usually a 40 % cut to off the cover price. So there's a lot to consider before you go into self publishing. Please join a critique group or make sure you have an editor look it over. Make sure your acknowledgements thank your editor or your critique group for doing the editing. It's important that your work is one step away from you, and there a perception that someone else has looked at it very critically. It gives you some extra authenticity.

But if you feel that's your last avenue and you desperately want your book published realize you've got a lot of marketing work to put in when you do that. You must have your own distribution system, do your own PR, and be out there and in everyone's face to make sure they want to read your book. You must make sure you get your own publicity and obtain reviews and go into the bookstores every so often to see if there is anything you can do to help sell the book.



It's a tough business out there right now and the publishing world is healthy, but not as healthy as it was a few years ago. But it's certainly one thing to write your book, and quite another once it's written. That's when the harder work starts. Even if you get a big publisher they don't have the money to spend on publicity any longer. They'll get it distributed for you which are the advantage of having an established publisher like Rendezvous who distributes through the Penguin group. So you've got great distribution there. But you still have to be out doing a lot of legwork and making people know who you are and what your book is about.

Barbara Fradkin and Mary Jane Maffini are excellent examples of this, they've got their fall schedule lined up and they've already started going on the road. There's a lot of hard work, and that takes time away from your writing, but it pays off, as they are amongst the best selling writers at that tier in Canada, particularly in this area. So it's not all roses out there, but if you're willing to work hard there's no reason why you can't get published – if you write a good book. I don't mean to be too discouraging, it really is hard, but writers know it's hard work. . . and you just have to get on with doing it.

### **BP: How's the short story market, Mike?**

**Mike Steinberg:** Oh, infinitely easier! However it still comes down to quality of writing. You do have to have a good solid piece of story – which has a beginning, middle and an end. But there are literally thousands of markets out there that take short stories and the beauty of that is with all the genres people are doing with mystery at the core, like a vampire PI and all the other mixes they have out there, the markets are wide open. Even at Storyteller, we are not genre specific, all we want is a story set in Canada, a character driven story. Vampires, werewolf's, astronauts, you name it we've had it.

Genre and non-genre are starting to thrive on the mix. Mystery on the whole in the short story market is starting to be saturated with the little old lady...it's all been done. So if you can mix in something a little different and make it work, it's going to be snapped up.

Know your market and know the audience for that magazine. Best bet; find a copy of that magazine. A lot of them now have websites with ample stories on those websites. So find a good market website, with links for guidelines pages. There's really good detail of what they look for there. Read the guidelines and follow them. Because a lot of publications, like Storyteller, get between 300 and 600 submissions per issue. Storyteller is looking for ten stories. So if you're not following our guidelines we're not going to finish reading it and it's going to go back to you. Read the guidelines.

If you are going to write something seasonal make sure you write it and submit at least four months prior to that season. So we are probably already too late for Christmas. Because a lot of magazines and anthologies want to print them out at least a month before the season and you want to give them three or four months before that to go through the slush pile they are going to get.

Another market I know that is getting very hot is Young Adult religion. One guy in my critiquing group about eight years ago was making a fairly decent living out of YA religious short stories. He submitted one to us and we didn't know he'd been published before. Everyone had pages and pages of what was wrong with it. He looked confused and said, "I don't understand. It's already been published." The point is if you know your market well enough, you don't have to be a phenomenal writer, you just have to know what they are looking for. Mary Zimmer Bradley once said something along the lines of: "Editors are not looking for wonderful writers; they are looking for writers that write what they (the editor) want. In this instance he knew the market he was writing for wanted the main gist of the story to be preaching somehow – a religious message. He was doing very well with that in the themed anthologies and magazines.

But whether you've got a vampire, or a werewolf or your character is an astronaut, or you're on Mars in whatever the genre is and you follow it up with a decent story behind it -- you'll get in to the anthology. It's amazing how many

**"I attended an event last year, but I became a member tonight.**

**I loved the overview of the current trends in the novel and short-story world, but the unique aspects of writing adult and young-adult mysteries was well worth the evening's outing."**

**Paul Sadler, CCW Member**

writers don't follow the market requirement. They write a story and get a list of markets that they think look good and ship stories off to everyone. An editor looks at their story and says "Why did I get this?" So take the time to research your market, to know what they're looking for and to write to that market.

### **BP: Do you write to your market, or do you write and try to market it?**

**MS:** I do both. I wrote a story on a gay gargoyle looking for love in all the wrong places. I came up with the idea when I saw the guidelines for a religiously inspired erotic work anthology. It was close to Halloween and I was sitting at my desk looking at my little stuffed werewolf and thought, "That could be interesting." Then I looked at my gargoyle and was completely inspired. I wrote it up, sent it in and they loved it. You never know what these pieces are going to do.

### **BP: Now over to the authors. What are the requirements of your genre in the market?**

**Rick Mofina:** I guess I'm lucky because I've got a few books out there and I've heard from readers so they've kind of let me know what they want. But Mike said it -- it's a general principle -- you have to have a good story. Thrillers are just fast paced books; books that keep people turning pages, with lots of twists and turns and hooks. But they have to be infused with just the right amount of character that makes the reader empathise with them right from the get go. You try to create a character who is a common person and character who faces a conflict or a problem right from the start, or is going to be a part of a terrible situation or a dramatic situation -- right from the get go. Otherwise there is really no point in turning pages. So for me those are the requirements. Basically, good storytelling.

I don't particularly look for an eye to the market. I tried that in the early days and failed miserably. Then I stepped back and wrote what I felt I wanted to write and something I felt I was in command of, and that seemed to do it for me. It isn't so much the market itself. You hear this over and over again: Write what you know, what you read about, what you feel strongly about, the stuff that interests you, that will carry you on, or you have personal experience with, or a personal interest. You don't have to be an expert in the field; you don't have to go to the moon to write about space.

It's essential that you have to first focus on the product, because in the end it is a commercial product. If it's your goal to be published, to have something with a price tag on it, then it's going to be a commercial entity. There's a bit of an entrepreneurial eye that you have to have put to the market. So when you decide on what it is you want to write then you might want to look down the road at the next level-- to actually finding an agent, finding a publisher, and thinking about how you as the author will help market your own book.

And you should enter it with the understanding that you really are going to be on your own. After eight books I've learned a little bit about the industry, and I've learned from other authors about the advantage of cross marketing. For example if you've written a book where at least a significant chunk is about a minister, you might want to offer it to religious magazines or let religious communities know -- and shift the emphasis of what the story is about when you offer it to them. It might not entirely be about a minister. But you can flip that around.

For example, in my first series one of the major characters is a Polish American detective. I approached a large Polish American newspaper in Chicago, and said, "Look this is about a Polish guy." They had a reach of about a hundred thousand people and they reviewed it, even though they said to me, "This is not really about a Polish guy. But it did kind of have a ring to it." So that kind of worked out. And the detective did eat a bit of Polish food.

That's the kind of thing you might want to consider. I remember there was an element in one of my books that had an RCMP canine unit. I approached a dog magazine and said "Look this book is about an RCMP canine," even though it was just one scene in one chapter. And because there was a Mountie in it, I sent it to the Pony Express which has quite a reach with anyone familiar with the RCMP internal publication. They did a 75 word feature on it which didn't hurt. I did hear from some people that had seen the review in the Pony Express.

So keep an eye to the market but first and foremost: make it a good story and one you feel passionate about. That's the requirement. But don't get too tied up in keeping an eye to the market -- don't try to anticipate the trend. Whatever is selling now in terms of books, might not be selling by the time you get your book done. Don't try to

emulate whatever is out there now, because the field is rich and open. A glance of the New York Times fiction best seller list shows that six out of the twelve books are crime fiction books. So the appetite for crime fiction is strong. I mean that in the universal sense because it is a big community; a big genre with a thousand sub genres. With the appetite so strong it's a big field to be mined. Approach it as your own person; don't get too distracted by what's hot out there. Just focus on your work the rest can be learned from your experience, and from other authors and market experts, - you can pick that up. But the main requirement is a good story.

**Brenda Chapman:** I would say the same is true for the children's market which has its' own culture -- you'd be amazed. You can write for different age groups, like the picture books which aren't really mystery stories, but I write for the young adult age group. I wrote *Running Scared* for my daughters and submitted it to a few publishers. One was Orca in British Columbia. He was interested in the book but he said there were elements missing from the mystery that didn't make sense. So even in a children's book everything in a mystery has to flow along, the clues have to be set in properly, just as in an adult book.



The only real difference is your choice of language, and your characters of course are kids. But it follows the same guidelines; you need a good story, good characters that kids can relate too, and you have to build in your suspense. But publicity and marketing are certainly different as well. I've done signings in books stores but you don't tend to get a lot of people out if you're a young adult author because most of the people coming in are looking for adult books of some sort. I go into the schools, libraries, and groups like the Canadian Children's Book Centre, which is a big one in Canada.

There are other groups you can join with chat lines, like [MurderMustAdvertise@yahoo.com](mailto:MurderMustAdvertise@yahoo.com) which is a group of authors from the US and England and some in Canada. They talk about ways of advertising your books. It's quite a supportive group but they don't have many writers in it that are involved in the children's market. I enjoy writing for kids and going into the schools and talking to them. Kids are quite sophisticated in what they read and what they're after; they rate their authors like we rate adult authors.

## **BP: How do you deal with using the right language for children?**

**BC:** Sometimes I find I'm writing in my adult voice and I have to change the language. I'll go back and say, "Is that what a kid would say?" You certainly have to keep it in mind. But I also like the poetry of language so I like to include a good deal of imagery in my books. A lot of what is going on I have behind the scenes and I find as kids get older they get different things out of my books. I've had kids read my book and they've told me that you get more out of it if you're a bit older. It's still a good story if you're a 10 year old, but if you're 13 you'll see more in it. When adults read my books they see different layers. I think writing for kids you can do that.

My first book was written for the 10 to 13 age group and I've been aging my character since. Now she's 15. I received a frantic email from my publisher saying "You're aging her. Stop!" It was because I was getting out of that 10-13 year old market, which is where their market is and where they sell the majority of their books. When you get to the older adolescents they don't sell as well - I think because a lot of them move into adult books.

**Stay tuned for Part Two of the Mystery Market panel discussion in December's issue of The Purloined!**



## Short story markets

By Mike Steinberg

Here is a short list of the best market sites I have seen. I would recommend that everyone check them out, regardless of genre mix you write. There is always that perfect little market buried somewhere in the various lists. And when you find a list or two that you like, you should check back at least once a month to check for updates with new markets.

The biggest repository is going to be the Writer's Digest "Novel and Short Story Market" book -- but it is huge and may not cover all markets available, so be sure to check out the on-line listings as well. The book is usually done up a good ten months in advance so it won't have the newer markets or anthologies in there. Also... be sure to check out a magazine or anthology's on-line website, if it has one, to be sure that there haven't been any last minute changes. Many of them will even post partial or complete stories as an example of the style/content/subjects they are looking for. So it is well worth the time to do this.

Here is a list of the market list sites I use the most:

[www.ralan.com](http://www.ralan.com) This is the #1 choice -- it's a most amazing site

[www.literarymarketplace.com](http://www.literarymarketplace.com)

[www.jwbw.co.uk/markets.html](http://www.jwbw.co.uk/markets.html) A list of UK markets that call for a different set of publishing rights

[www.marketlist.com](http://www.marketlist.com)

[www.forwriters.com/markets.html](http://www.forwriters.com/markets.html)

[www.writerswrite.com/writersguidelines](http://www.writerswrite.com/writersguidelines)

[www.stuartmarket.com](http://www.stuartmarket.com) (Christian markets)



### BOOK REVIEW

by Linda Wiken, Prime Crime Books, 891 Bank St. Ottawa

#### THE ARTFUL EDIT

by Susan Bell, \$30.00

The sub-title of this writer-friendly guide to self-editing is, 'On the practice of editing yourself'. It's loaded with lively writing ideas, examples, and exercises. A good book to read through then have by your side when doing the dreaded deed. It's in hardcover for those who can't wait, but should be available in trade paperback by spring, 2008.

### ART COPIES LIFE

by Bill Newman

Crime authors beware. The police might read your stories and charge you with crimes similar to the ones in your stories -- especially if you've actually committed them! Polish author, Krystian Bala was found guilty of the murder of a businessman four years after he published a novel that bore strong resemblance to an actual crime. Bala believed that his estranged wife was having an affair with the businessman. There appeared to be nothing linking Bala to the wife's presumed lover, so it is likely if he hadn't have written the book he wouldn't have been caught.

(Adapted from a BBC news item, 5 September 2007)